



# Treating the Common Cold

The common cold is an illness that can be spread from person to person that affects the nose and throat. The most common symptoms include:

- Cough and a stuffy nose
- Low fever
- A runny nose, sneezing
- A scratchy or sore throat

Regular hand washing can help prevent the spread of germs that can cause the common cold, as well as covering your mouth when you sneeze or cough.

Treatments that you can use include:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get plenty of rest
- Use a wet, cold washcloth when you have a headache or fever
- Use saline nose drops
- Use a cool mist vaporizer
- Take honey for a cough (for children age 1 and over)

Always talk to your doctor about which treatments you should try or over the counter medications you can take to lessen symptoms.

Antibiotics don't work to treat the common cold and can even make it harder to treat infections the next time.

## Some things to consider about treatment

The common cold is an infection caused by a virus and not bacteria so antibiotics will not treat it. Every time a person takes antibiotics when they are not needed, the medication will become less effective. Bacteria will then become stronger and will be harder for your doctor to treat.

**If you want to get your child in for care call your child's doctor today to schedule a checkup.** If you need help making an appointment, please call Aetna Better Health Kids member services representatives. Call **1-800-822-2447 (TTY 711)**.



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